



The Sixty-ninth Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lammot Belin
Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,800th Concert

**New York Opera Society
National Gallery of Art Chamber Players**

**Max and Moritz:
A Cartoon Opera in Seven Pranks**

World Premiere Performance

October 17, 2010
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm
East Building Auditorium

Admission free

Presented in honor of *Edvard Munch: Master Prints*
and in connection with “Norway Comes to Washington”

The opera is made possible by a generous grant from
the Royal Norwegian Embassy

Max and Moritz:
A Cartoon Opera in Seven Pranks

Music: Gisle Kverndokk

Libretto: Øystein Wiik

Gisle Kverndokk, *conductor*

Joachim Schamberger, *stage director, set and projection designer*

Camille Assaf, *costume designer*

Marcus Doshi, *lighting designer*

Cast

Trouble

John Tiranno

Max

Carlos Feliciano

Moritz

Gustavo Ahualli

Mrs. Cackle

Juliana Rambaldi

Henny the Hen, Heli-Mom

Sarah Pillow

Henriette the Hen, Mr. Guru,
Mr. Cervello, Belinda the
Thai Tarantula

Victor Benedetti

Instrumentalists

Sarah Nichols, *flute*

Kevin McKee, *trumpet*

Robert Battey, *cello*

Danielle Hahn, *piano*

Production Staff

Iris Dawn O'Brien, *production stage
manager*

Jennifer Cho, *executive director,
New York Opera Society*

Adam Green, *assistant lighting designer*

Elizabeth Young, *deputy to the director,*

Patricia Taylor, *costume painter*

New York Opera Society

Franklin Labowitz, *assistant to the
costume designer*

Commissioned by the New York Opera Society
The opera is performed without intermission

NEW YORK OPERA SOCIETY

New York Opera Society (NYOS) benefits artists and audiences alike through timely productions that offer fresh and provocative interpretations of contemporary and classical works. NYOS annually tours a new production of an extant work at international festivals and features a contemporary opera or new commission in the United States. In addition, it hosts a salon series and an international residency for artists; supports outreach in underserved communities; and runs Les Jeunes Solistes, a training and educational program.

In its most recent seasons, NYOS presented new productions of *Falstaff* and *Madama Butterfly* for its annual festival in southern France; the United States premiere of a contemporary Spanish opera, *Las Horas vacias*, by Guggenheim fellow and Juilliard faculty member Ricardo Llorca; and two performances at the National Gallery of Art—a showcase for young Norwegian singers in December 2008 and a Gershwin songfest in honor of *From Impressionism to Modernism: The Chester Dale Collection* in February 2010. Other notable NYOS evenings have taken place at the Chicago Cultural Center, the Embassy of Italy, and the World Financial Center in New York City. In the coming weeks, NYOS and the National Gallery of Art Chamber Players will take *Max and Moritz: A Cartoon Opera in Seven Pranks* to New York City and Palm Springs, California, for its second and third performances.

New York Opera Society is led by its president, A.T. Nguyen, and by executive director Jennifer Cho, who has received numerous awards for her work in music since completing her studies as at Northwestern University.

GISLE KVERNDOKK

One of Norway's leading opera composers, Gisle Kverndokk wrote his first opera when he was fifteen years old, a radio opera commissioned by The Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation. Shortly thereafter he left his home town, Skien, Norway, to study composition, conducting, flute, and piano at The Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo, where he received a master of music degree in 1995. He also studied at The Juilliard School in New York. Kverndokk has received commissions from a number of opera houses in Norway and Germany, and has had notable success with two operas at The Norwegian National Opera — *The Fourth Watch of the Night* (2005) and *Around the World in Eighty Days* (2010). The latter opera was commissioned for the opening of the new opera house in Oslo.

Kverndokk has collaborated with librettist Øystein Wiik on numerous musical dramas, including *Sophie's World* (1998), *Vincent van Gogh* (2001), *Dangerous Liaisons* (2002), and *Martin L— Das Luthermusical* (2008), which was nominated for The Nordic Council's music prize.

ØYSTEIN WIIK

In addition to his considerable output as a librettist, Øystein Wiik is a singer, actor, and writer. A graduate of The State Academy of Theater in Oslo, he was employed at The Norwegian Theater from 1980 to 1988, where he played lead roles in several major musical productions, including Tony in *West Side Story*, the title role in *Sweeney Todd*, Rum Tum Tugger in *Cats*, and Theo in *Piaf*. His 1988 performances of Jean Valjean in *Les Misérables* led to international acclaim when he repeated the role in London and Vienna. In 1991 Wiik released a solo album entitled *Too Many Mornings: Songs by Sondheim*. More recent albums include *Det er jul*, *Pavane*, *Stage*, and *West End Favoritter*. Wiik has acted in as well as written the lyrics for two of his four collaborations with composer Gisle Kverndokk. He played Alberto Knox—the male lead in *Sophie's World*—and the title role in *Vincent van Gogh*.

JOACHIM SCHAMBERGER

A graduate of the Musikhochschule in Würzburg, Germany, and the Merola Opera Program of the San Francisco Opera, Joachim Schamberger works internationally as a stage director and virtual theater designer. He was also trained in digital film production and 3-D animation at the New York Film Academy. He has worked with young artists at the Brooklyn College Conservatory, the International Institute of Vocal Arts in Italy, the Juilliard School of Music in New York, and VOICEexperience in Florida. This past season he also served as the artistic director for Indianapolis Opera's young artist program. Recent productions include *La Bohème* for Connecticut Grand Opera; *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Das Rheingold*, and *Tosca* for Indianapolis Opera; *Rigoletto* and *Sweeney Todd* for Shreveport Opera; *Martha* and *The Wizard of Oz* for the Landestheater Coburg in Germany; *Falstaff* for the Théâtre Municipal in Castres, France; *Die Zauberflöte*, *Idomeneo*, and *The Rake's Progress* for the International Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv, Israel; *Angelica/Schicchi*, *La Rondine*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor* for Opera Tampa; and *Così fan tutte* for the Conservatory in Stony Brook, New York. More information is available at www.joachimschamberger.com.

GUSTAVO AHUALLI

Baritone Gustavo Ahualli made his operatic debut in 1996 as Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Teatro San Martin in Tucuman, Argentina. Since then, he has sung leading baritone roles in *Carmen*, *Così fan tutte*, *Don Carlo*, *Don Pasquale*, *Eugene Onegin*, *La Bohème*, *La Favorita*, *La Traviata*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Pagliacci*, and *Turandot*. Ahualli has recently performed at Argentina's Teatro Argentino de la Plata and Teatro San Martin; Italy's Teatro Lauro Rossi; Peru's Teatro Segura; and Saint Louis' Union Avenue Opera Theatre as well as with the New Jersey Association of Verismo Opera, Palm Beach Opera, and Wichita Grand Opera.

Much in demand as an oratorio soloist, Ahualli has sung Johann Sebastian Bach's *Magnificat* at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires; the final movement of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* at Yankee Stadium (in honor of the recent visit to the United States of Pope Benedict XVI); and Verdi's *Requiem*

at the Sacred Heart Basilica in Newark, New Jersey. Now a resident of the United States, Ahualli was born in San Miguel de Tucuman, Argentina. He began his musical training at age seven with Hilda Deniflee, herself a student of Kodály and Bartók. In 1998 Ahualli obtained the *maestria de canto* from the Instituto Superior de Arte del Teatro Colón. In 2006 he won first prize in the New Jersey Association of Verismo Opera Competition. He holds positions as bilingual cantor for the Sacred Heart Cathedral Basilica in Newark and Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York City.

VICTOR BENEDETTI

Baritone Victor Benedetti's latest season includes the title role in *Wozzeck* with the Astoria Music Festival, a debut with Toledo Opera as Ford in *Falstaff*, and a role debut as Alfonso in *La Favorita* with Stadttheater Giessen. Last season his roles included Scarpia in *Tosca* and Peter in *Hansel und Gretel* with Indianapolis Opera and the title role in *Falstaff* with the Théâtre Municipal in Castres, France. He made his debut with New York City Opera in the title role of *Don Giovanni*, a performance that earned him that company's Debut Artist of the Year award. With Washington National Opera at the Kennedy Center, he has appeared as Nardo in *La Finta Giardiniera*, Slim in *Of Mice and Men*, John Proctor in *The Crucible*, and John Sorel in *The Consul*. He received his bachelor and master of music degrees from Northwestern University and launched his professional singing career with the Lyric Opera Center for American Artists of Lyric Opera of Chicago. More information about the artist is available at www.VictorBenedetti.com

CARLOS FELICIANO

A native of Puerto Rico, tenor Carlos Feliciano was recently heard with the Oslo Opera and the Oslo Symphony Orchestra. He completed a two-year resident artist program with the Pittsburgh Opera and made his debut with the company as Messaggero in *Aida*. Other roles with Pittsburgh Opera include the Philistine Messenger in *Samson et Dalila* and Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* as well as Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*. He performed with the Project Opera of Manhattan's *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Die Zauberflöte*,

Le Nozze di Figaro and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Feliciano made his European debut in March 2007, singing with the New York Opera Society in Castres, France. He returned to Castres the following year to perform Fenton in Verdi's *Falstaff*. Feliciano received a bachelor of music degree from the Manhattan School of Music and completed his graduate work at The Juilliard School. He received first place at the Five Towns Music and Arts Foundation Competition in 2006; was a finalist for the Violetta Du Pont Voice Competition 2007; and has also received a full-tuition scholarship from The Juilliard School as well as scholarships from the Manhattan School of Music, the Assisi Music Festival, and the Musical Arts Corporation of Puerto Rico.

SARAH PILLOW

Soprano Sarah Pillow has built a unique career by drawing on her expertise in jazz, classical, and early music. Her performance credits include several avant-garde projects at The Kitchen in New York City; *The Marian Vespers* of 1610 with The New York Collegium; and The Montreux Jazz Festival. Pillow has toured more than thirty cities in the United States with both her jazz quartet and her crossover project, Nuove Musiche. She is also the director of her own group, Galileo's Daughters, and has eight recordings available of both jazz and early music repertoire. Recent performances have taken her to British Columbia; Madison and Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Mumbai, India; and New York City. More information about Sarah Pillow can be found at www.galileosdaughters.com and www.buckyballmusic.com.

JULIANA RAMBALDI

A national finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, soprano Juliana Rambaldi received an ARIA Award and the George London Award. She began her career at the Lyric Opera Chicago Center for American Artists. Following her training, she performed many roles at Lyric Opera Chicago, including Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, Marguerite in *Faust*, and Musetta in *La Bohème*. In 2000 she received critical acclaim for creating the role of Catherine in the world premiere of William Bolcom's *A View from the*

Bridge. Rambaldi has also sung many leading roles with other American opera companies. She sang her New York debut as the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with New York City Opera; appeared as Sandrina in Mozart's *La Finta Giardiniera* with Glimmerglass Opera; and sang the role of Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffman* and Violetta in *La Traviata* with Houston Grand Opera as well as significant roles in the opera houses of Honolulu, Saint Louis, and Seattle. Her extensive concert repertoire includes Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Mozart's *Exultate, jubilate* and *Mass in C Minor*, and Ferko's *Stabat Mater*. In addition to her operatic and concert work, Rambaldi is an accomplished actress, currently performing as "La Diva" with Teatro Zinzanni, a circus and cabaret in Seattle.

JOHN TIRANNO

Versatile American tenor John Tiranno's recent opera engagements include Alfredo in *La Traviata* (Granite State Opera), Arturo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Connecticut Grand Opera), Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (Concert Opera of Philadelphia), Beppe in *Pagliacci* (New York Grand Opera), Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* (Opera Colorado), Dr. Caius in *Falstaff* (Toledo Opera), the title role in Gounod's *Faust* (Opera in the Heights), and Lord Tolloller in *Iolanthe* (Nashville Opera). As a concert soloist, he has appeared in performances of Mahler's *Symphony no. 8* (National Academy Orchestra of Canada), Beethoven's *Symphony no. 9* and Haydn's *Creation* (Vermont Mozart Festival), and Handel's *Messiah* with the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra. He has sung with the American Symphony Orchestra, Bohème Opera, the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra, the Discovery Orchestra, Lake George Opera, Light Opera of New York, Sarasota Opera, and Teatro Grattacileo in New York City.

CAMILLE ASSAF

A graduate of l'Université de la Sorbonne in Paris and the Yale School of Drama, Franco-American designer Camille Assaf lives in New York City, where she designed costumes and sets for Dance New Amsterdam, the Guggenheim Museum, the Joyce Theater, the New York City Ballet, and the Park Avenue Armory as well as for the New York Opera Society production of *Don Giovanni*. Other costume credits in the United States include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Wolf Trap Opera), *Elmer Gantry* (Nashville Opera), *The Glass Cage* (Mint Theater, New York City), *The King Stag* (Yale Repertory Theater), *Pride and Prejudice* (Playmakers Repertory Theater), and *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* (Syracuse Stage). She has also designed costumes for the opening ceremony of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing and for operas staged in Castres, France; Florence, Italy; Hong Kong, China; and Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Camille Assaf is a recipient of a grant from the career development program of the National Endowment for the Arts Career Development Group.

MARCUS DOSHI

Marcus Doshi designs scenery and lighting for theater, opera, and dance and collaborates with artists and architects in an array of non-performance ventures. In addition to designing the lighting for the New York Opera Society productions of *Don Giovanni* and *Falstaff*, his credits include award-winning New York City productions of *Hamlet* and *Othello* as well as productions of *Measure for Measure*; *Tfana, a Boy and His Soul*; *Things of Dry Hours*; *The First Breeze of Summer*; and *Queens Boulevard (The Musical)*. Outside of New York, his work has been seen at Het Musiektheatre in Amsterdam (*Pamina Devi*); Phnom Penh, Cambodia (*Where Elephants Weep*), and Seattle (*Elektra*) as well as at theaters in Boston; Chicago; Hartford, Connecticut; Kansas City, Missouri; and Portland, Oregon. Doshi received his undergraduate education at Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana, and a master of fine arts degree from the Yale School of Drama. More information about him is available at www.marcusdoshi.com.

IRIS DAWN O'BRIEN

Stage manager Iris Dawn O'Brien's recent credits include the Broadway production of *Hamlet* and Off-Broadway's *Sarah Ruhl's Passion Play*; Yale Repertory Theatre's *Rough Crossing*, *Sarah Ruhl's Passion Play* and *Trouble in Mind*; and Northern Stage's *Parallel Lives*. Other credits include the Los Angeles Film Festival in 2008; Tony Kushner's *The Henry Box Brown Play* and *HmatrixH* at New York University's graduate acting program; and *Peer Gynt*, *Good Egg*, *Marcus: or the Secret of Sweet*, and *Titus Andronicus* at the Yale School of Drama.

Program Notes

In 1865 the German author Wilhelm Busch wrote and illustrated the children's book *Max und Moritz — Eine Bubengeschichte in sieben Streichen* (Max and Moritz — A Story of Seven Boyish Pranks). The German title satirizes the custom, prevalent since the eighteenth century, of giving a subtitle to novels and dramas by way of a didactic explanation for the existence of the work. The blackly humorous tale in rhymed couplets exaggerates the pranks and punishments that are a universal feature of the life of active children. It was a popular bedtime story in German-speaking households throughout the rest of the nineteenth century and on into the twentieth century, when it was eventually translated into all of the European languages and became a pan-European favorite. *Max und Moritz* has become a benchmark of German culture and even today is as well known in German-speaking countries as the fairy tales of the brothers Grimm. Students of the history of comic strips consider *Max und Moritz* to have been the direct inspiration for the *Katzenjammer Kids*, which debuted in *The American Humorist* in 1897.

Max and Moritz: A Cartoon Opera in Seven Pranks is an adaptation of the mid-nineteenth-century story for modern times, developed by librettist Øystein Wiik and composer Gisle Kverndokk. The composer writes:

An opera director told me that he believed Stravinsky was influenced by Mozart operas and the Broadway musical of the 1940s when composing *The Rake's Progress*. I think this is a very good way of seeing it, and ever since I have been thinking of this as an interesting point of view when I have worked on my operas. The playfulness held together in a strong dramaturgy is very present in these two forms, and that is what I value the most in musical theatre.

I see *Max and Moritz* as an absurd piece of musical entertainment. Evoking Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale*, I exploit the theatrical connotations of military trumpet, piccolo blasting, romantic cello solos, and the arias and duets in classical forms. Then there is the Broadway showmanship that I feel is necessary to highlight the humorous aspect. It is always wonderful to burst into song. This is

also a sort of Marx Brothers way of developing the music, to suddenly delve into another kind of piece, another kind of music that came from nowhere but is acted out as the most natural thing—a game of association.

Cartoon music is historically linked to opera. The Hollywood film music tradition came from European romantic composers who had written big operas in Vienna and Berlin, and created in Hollywood, as Erich Korngold said, “little hidden operas.” The way the music described the action and the emotions was very operatic. This is developed to the extreme in cartoon music, and following up the action to the split second—“mickey mousing”—is a fun way to create a musical structure that, [if] isolated, can seem very complex. I use this technique in *Max and Moritz*. The music follows the characters step by step with all sorts of surprises—bumps, crashes, horror warnings, yoga chanting, ballet music, and lush romantic outbursts. I use a great variety of styles—marches, waltzes, tarantella, coloratura aria, Jerry Herman-like songs, swing, Charleston, and a few quotes from Tchaikovsky, Mozart, and Verdi.

This is a quick, funny opera for the whole family!

Next Week at the National Gallery of Art

Trio con Brio Copenhagen

Music by Ravel and Saint-Saëns

October 20, 2010

Wednesday, 12:10 pm

West Building Lecture Hall



Great Noise Ensemble
Armando Bayolo, conductor

Music by Louis Andriessen

October 24, 2010

Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm

East Building Atrium

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

Please note that late entry or reentry of the East Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

For the convenience of concertgoers the Garden Café remains open until 6:00 pm for light refreshments.

Music Department
National Gallery of Art
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Washington, DC

www.nga.gov